



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

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GILBERT MAN SENTENCED FOR THEFT OF \$600,000 OF GOVERNMENT FUNDS

PHOENIX –The former president of an international export firm was sentenced by United States District Court Judge Roslyn O. Silver on July 31, 2006, to one year and one day in federal prison for bilking a federal agency of more than \$600,000. Robert Lamoine Gunnell, 41, of Gilbert,. has also been ordered to pay \$608,707.56 in restitution to the United States Department of Agriculture's Commodity Credit Corporation. Gunnell entered a plea of guilty on April 5, 2006, to Theft of Government Property, a felony.

Gunnell was President of International Export Management, Inc., which operated through offices in Tucson and Gilbert. Gunnell's company participated in a United States Department of Agriculture program which reimbursed companies for 50% of the expenses they incurred for foreign advertising and promotion of American food and agricultural products.

At his guilty plea, Gunnell admitted in U.S. District Court that in 2001 he knowingly submitted fraudulent invoices in support of his claims for reimbursement in promoting his products, Dairy Gold Milk and Athlete's Choice Sport Drink, in Mexico. Court ordered restitution will reimburse the government for false claims which were paid from January 2001 to October 2003.

The investigation was conducted by Special Agent Tara Davis of the Office of the Inspector General of the United States Department of Agriculture.. The prosecution was handled by Richard I. Mesh and Frank T. Galati, Assistant U.S. Attorneys, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR-05-1294 PHX-ROS
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